



FEMA

March 28, 2019

SENT VIA E-MAIL TO: 70769-33538076@requests.muckrock.com

Jessie Gomez
MuckRock News
MuckRock News DEPT MR 70769
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Re: FEMA FOIA Number 2019-FEFO-00413 Acknowledgment

Dear Mr. Gomez:

This letter acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), dated March 22, 2019, and to your request for a waiver of all assessable fees. Your request was received in this office on March 22, 2019. You are seeking records relating to how many people contacted FEMA to change their home address from Puerto Rico to the mainland US between September 7, 2017 and October 31, 2018.

Due to the increasing number of FOIA requests received by this office, we may encounter some delay in processing your request. Consistent with 6 C.F.R. § 5.5(a) of the DHS FOIA regulations, the Department processes FOIA requests according to their order of receipt. Although DHS' goal is to respond within 20 business days of receipt of your request, FOIA does permit a 10-day extension of this time period in certain circumstances. As your request seeks documents that will require a thorough and wide-ranging search, DHS will invoke a 10-day extension for your request pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B). If you would like to narrow the scope of your request, please contact our office. We will make every effort to comply with your request in a timely manner.

You have requested a fee waiver. The DHS FOIA Regulations at 6 CFR § 5.11(k)(2), set forth six factors DHS is required to evaluate in determining whether the applicable legal standard for a fee waiver has been met: (1) Whether the subject of the requested records concerns "the operations or activities of the government;" (2) Whether the disclosure is "likely to contribute" to an understanding of government operations or activities; (3) Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to the understanding of the public at large, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requestor or a narrow segment of interested persons; (4) Whether the contribution to public understanding of government operations or activities will be "significant;" (5) Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure; and (6) Whether the magnitude of any identified commercial interest to the requestor is sufficiently large in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requestor.

Upon review of the subject matter of your request, and an evaluation of the six factors identified above, FEMA has determined that it will conditionally grant your request for a fee waiver. The fee waiver determination will be based upon a sampling of the responsive documents received from the various FEMA program offices as a result of the searches conducted in response to your FOIA request. FEMA will, pursuant to FEMA regulations applicable to media requesters, process the first 100 pages. If upon review of these documents, FEMA determines that the disclosure of the information contained in those documents does not meet the factors permitting FEMA to waive the fees, then FEMA will at that time either deny your request for a fee waiver entirely, or will allow for a percentage reduction in the amount of the fees corresponding to the amount of relevant material found that meets the factors allowing for a fee waiver. In either case, FEMA will promptly notify you of its final decision regarding your request for a fee waiver and provide you with the responsive records as required by applicable law.

In the event that your fee waiver is denied, and you determine that you still want the records, provisions of the FOIA allow us to recover part of the cost of complying with your request. We shall charge you for records in accordance with the DHS FOIA regulations as they apply to media requestors. As a media requester you will be charged 10 cents per page for duplication; the first 100 pages are free. You stated in your request that you are willing to pay assessable fees up to \$25.00. This office will contact you before accruing any additional fees.

We have queried the appropriate component(s) of DHS for responsive records. If any responsive records are located, they will be reviewed for determination of releasability. Please be assured that one of the processors in our office will respond to your request as expeditiously as possible. We appreciate your patience as we proceed with your request.

Your request has been assigned reference number **2019-FEFO-00413**. Please refer to this identifier in any future correspondence. To check the status of your FOIA request, you may contact this office at (202) 646-3323 or email at FEMA-FOIA@fema.dhs.gov, or you may check the status of your request online at <https://www.dhs.gov/check-status-your-foia-request>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Bridges", written in a cursive style.

Greg Bridges
Lead Government Information Specialist